

Delta Operations for Salmonids and Sturgeon (DOSS) Group
Conference call: 10/18/11 at 9:00 a.m.

Objective: Provide advice to the Water Operations Management Team (WOMT) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on measures to reduce adverse effects from Delta operations of the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project on salmonids and green sturgeon. DOSS will coordinate the work of other technical teams. DOSS notes and advice can be found at: <http://www.swr.noaa.gov/ocap/doss.htm>

DWR: Andy Chu, Jim Gleim, Tracy Pettit, Mike Ford

FWS: Roger Guinee, Leigh Bartoo, Pat Brandes, Joseph Kirsch, Craig Anderson

NMFS: Barb Byrne, Barbara Rocco

Reclamation: Russ Yaworsky

DFG: Bob Fujimura, Joe Johnson

EPA, SWRCB: not present

Action items

- Check on green sturgeon ID protocols for this year (carried to next meeting).

Agenda

1. Current operations
2. Fish monitoring
3. Results of Mokelumne R/DCC gate closure (Joe Johnson)
4. Chipps Island modified sampling (Pat Brandes or Joe Kirsch)
5. Schedule for San Joaquin River fall attraction flows (Craig Anderson)
6. Schedule for annual review presentations

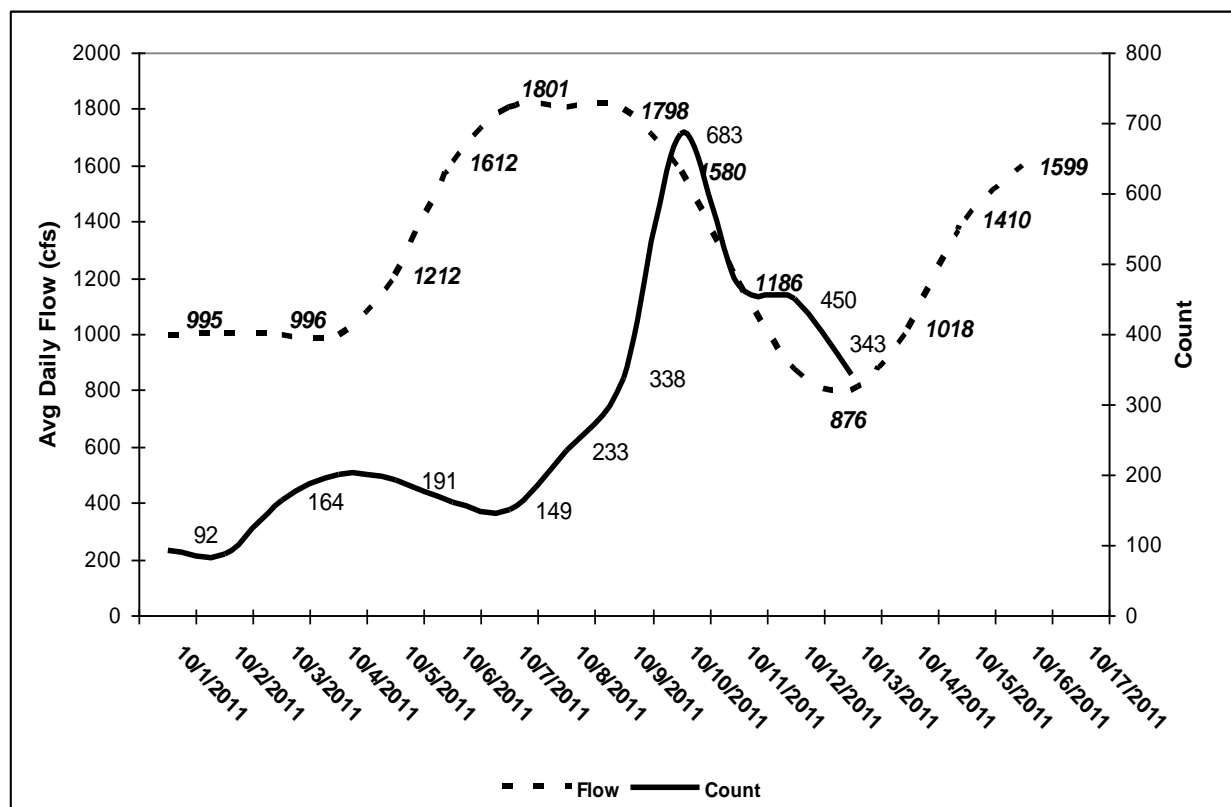
Annual Review: Reminder that annual review is scheduled for November 8 & 9 in the Federal Building at 650 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814. We are not sure whether there will be any Webex access but will send information to the DOSS group as we receive it.

The DOSS annual report is out for review and we are waiting for Reclamation's comments. Thuy and Bruce will present a dry run of the DOSS presentation during next week's DOSS meeting. NMFS (Byrne) will check on a location and advise the group by email of where to meet. We may be able to set up a Webex conference for those who cannot attend in person. In the meantime, please pass on any additional presentation information to Thuy, Bruce, or Barbara R. There was a question about whether the annual review meeting would include a presentation about VAMP, since the VAMP study was closely coordinated with the 6-year study that will be presented at the annual review meeting by Reclamation (Israel). NMFS (Byrne) noted that a summary of the 2011 VAMP study design and the 2010 VAMP results is included as an appendix in the DOSS annual report, but that the annual review would likely focus on the six-year acoustic tag study required under the RPA.

Status of DCC Gate Closure Proposal (Johnson): From 10/5/11 to 10/11/11, 3,313 adult Chinook salmon passed through the fish ladder at Woodbridge Dam. As of midnight on Thursday, 10/13/11, 4,106 adult Chinook salmon had passed through Woodbridge since 10/5/11; CDFG estimated that an additional 400-500 passed Woodbridge on Friday and Saturday (10/14–10/15/2011). CDFG is still counting and should get that data later today. As part of this study on migration of Chinook salmon into the Mokelumne, Chinook salmon adults are being tagged (some with visual tags only; some with both visual and acoustic tags) near Jersey Point. One fish tagged on 9/21 before the DCC was closed showed up in the American River (was caught and reported); another fish tagged with a visual tag (blue, indicating was a non-ad-clipped fish) is known to be in the lower part of the Nimbus fish ladder, which will open November 2 or 3. Until this tag can be read, it's not known whether the fish was tagged before or after the DCC was closed. An acoustic tag was recovered yesterday (10/17/11) at the Mokelumne fish hatchery. While the DCC gates are open; the Mokelumne is still being operated to provide attraction pulses. A good number of fish are continuing to go into the Mokelumne—more than in previous years. There are a lot of 2 year olds coming back but not as many 3 year olds.

Below is a graph of fish-passage data for Chinook salmon at Woodbridge Dam from October 1 through October 17, 2011.

Flow vs Salmon Count at WBDD October 1 – 17, 2011



Fish Monitoring: The following table presents the fish monitoring data from to 10/17/11. For additional info: <http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/calfed/calfedmonitoring.cfm>

Location	Chippis Is. Midwater Trawl	Sacramento Kodiak Trawl	Mossdale Kodiak Trawl	Beach Seines	Knights Landing RST	Tisdale Weir RST
Sample Date	10/12–10/14	10/11, 10/13, 10/14	10/11, 10/12, 10/14	10/11–10/14	10/13, 10/17	10/12, 10/14, 10/17
Total Catch	66	0	0	5	3	0
FR						
LFR						
WR	1			1	3	
SR						
Ad-Clipped Chinook						
DS	64					
LFS						
SPTL	1			4		
SH (ad-clip)						
SH (wild)						
W. Temp. (avg. °F)	65.3	62.2	61.7	63.1	63.0	60.7
Flows (avg. cfs)					9,454	8,853
Turbidity (avg. NTU)					7.8	5.77
FR/SR Avg. CPUE						
WR/LFR Avg. CPUE					0.23	

Key: FR = Fall run; LFR = Late-fall run; SR = Spring run; WR = Winter run; SH = Steelhead; DS = Delta smelt; LFS = Longfin smelt; SPTL = Splittail; CPUE = catch per unit of effort, ACT = acoustical tag

Salvage: There were no listed species salvaged at either facility from 10/1/2011 to 10/17/2011. White sturgeon were salvaged at the Federal facility (weekly expanded salvage = 20) but not at the state facility. The seasonal (10/1–present) total expanded salvage of white sturgeon at the Federal facility is 20. They are considerably larger than those reported earlier this year in the summer (243 to 395 mm). Based on the size, no further confirmation is necessary. Sampling times have been reduced at both facilities due to high debris levels.

Knights Landing: There were 2 winter-run Chinook reported at last week's meeting and 3 noted from today's data; however, the Knights Landing Catch Index (KLCI) was less than 3 fish per day and thus no DCC gate closure was triggered under Action IV.1.2.

Beach seines: 1 winter run of 35 mm was caught at the American River site.

Chipps Island: 1 adult Chinook salmon at 300 mm, 1 splittail, and 64 delta smelt were caught. It was noted that the delta smelt were not identified to sex.

Red Bluff: There are a lot of older juvenile Chinook coming through Red Bluff. The number of fish ramped up in mid-September. No pulse like this has reached Tisdale or Knights Landing yet.

San Joaquin River Attraction Flows: Flows in the Stanislaus River are scheduled to go down after 10/21. FWS is maintaining its original schedule for the Tuolumne River with a few minor changes; now going down to about 300 cfs. Flows in the Merced River are remaining close to those of the late-September schedule; it is up to 1,200 cfs now and will remain at that rate until 10/21 and then ramp down by the end of October to about 400 cfs. There will be some smaller pulses in the Mokelumne River after the main large pulse. There are no major changes from the information circulated in late September. The Stanislaus is at 2,500 cfs, which is slightly different from the information given in September. This is a wet-year type, which calls for minimum flows of 300 cfs for November, December, and most of January per RPA Action III.1.3 and the flow schedule in Appendix 2-E Flows on the Stanislaus are expected to be sustained at 400-600 cfs by the end of the calendar year. Further information may be available at the SOG meeting tomorrow.

Chipps Island Modified Sampling: (FWS [Brandes and Kirsch]) The IEP management team met last week. The FWS in Stockton has notified IEP that they have exceeded 50% of their take limit for delta smelt, which is 1,000 per calendar year for all sampling efforts. FWS in Stockton reported that the take to date is more than 700 delta smelt (the majority caught at Chipps Island) and IEP has asked them to modify their sampling protocols or provide justification for continued sampling without modifications. The FWS would like suggestions from DOSS within the next few days on how to modify sampling protocols at Chipps Island to minimize any disruption in salmonid data important for DOSS. The FWS is evaluating alternatives such as, changing monitoring from 3 days/week to 1 day/week, or from 10 tows/day to 8 tows/day, or setting a daily take limit at which point FWS will stop sampling for the day. There are roughly about 5 hours of sampling, usually from 8:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

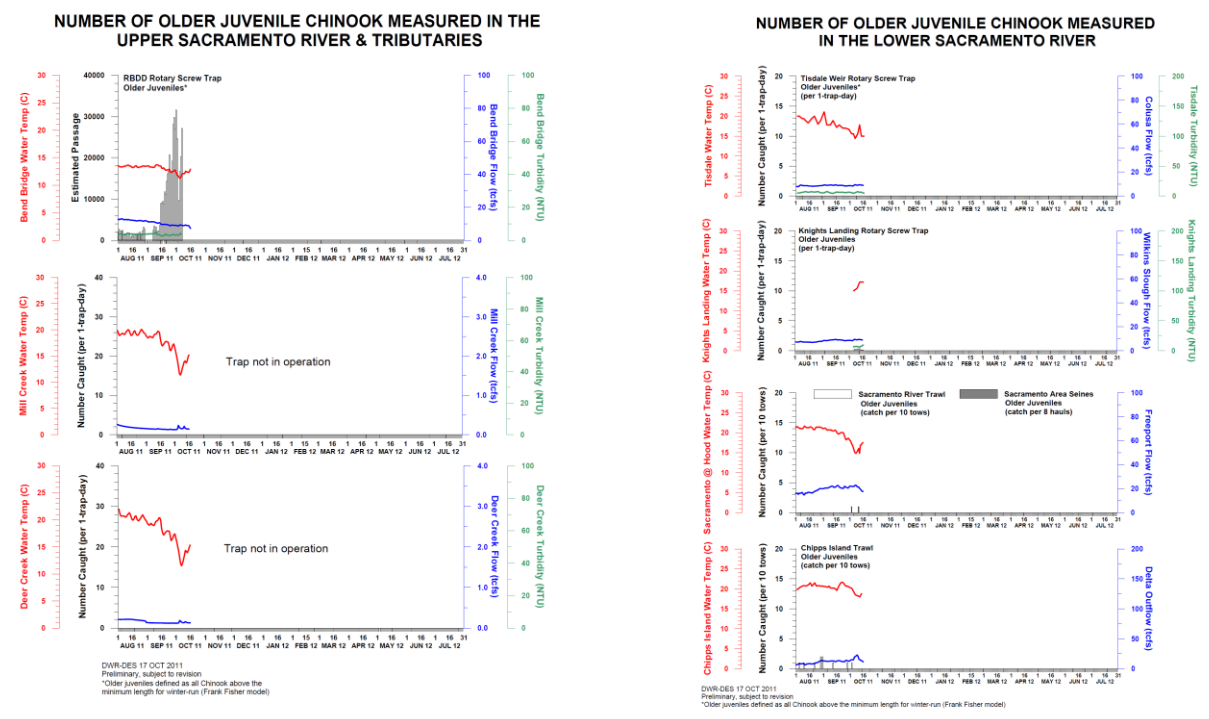
The expected take of delta smelt at the Chipps Island station through the rest of the year is hard to predict, though it was noted that delta smelt take usually increases in December.

The Chipps Island site is sampled 3 times/week now; it would be nice to implement any alternative by next week, although there is no scheduled time to report back to the IEP team. It might be prudent to do some sampling reduction to help ensure that the take limit isn't reached. The group agreed that salmonids are expected to show up a bit later so we could reduce sampling a bit now and then go back to full sampling later on. We also have considered moving the Chipps Island site in the past; however, that would be the least preferred and most disruptive change so that isn't being considered now. Changing sampling locations makes it difficult to

compare data between years. In previous years, modifications have included a reduction in sampling altogether.

The question was raised about whether the samples are used as an index of delta smelt abundance. The surveys have never been used as a delta smelt index; however, they are used as an index for salmon over time. There is probably some rationale to decreasing the sampling now and then increasing it later when we expect salmonids at Chipps Island. FWS may also want to limit daily take to a maximum when monitoring is cut back. A daily take limit of about 8 would help avoid reaching the take limit if FWS samples 3 days/week. FWS could scale back; 6-8 tows 3 days/week could give good daily estimates, but that would still leave them vulnerable to reaching their take limit before the end of the calendar year which would result in a gap in sampling. It was suggested that a daily incidental take limit be considered and also perhaps a weekly survey limit (e.g., only twice/week) to minimize the possibility of reaching the take limit. While DOSS wants to continue to monitor whether salmonids are exiting the delta at Chipps Island, there are so few fish moving out of the system at this time that a reduction in sampling is not a serious concern through November.

It was decided to have a separate telephone conference after DOSS has a chance to gather more information on salmonids at this time of year. The subgroup will provide advice to Stockton FWS staff to consider in their discussions with the IEP regarding possible sampling modifications. The call was scheduled for Thursday, 10/20/11 at 9:30 a.m. NMFS (Byrne) will send out the call information to the group.



The monitoring data for older juvenile Chinook salmon show that juveniles are moving down past Red Bluff diversion dam, but are not yet showing up in significant numbers at sampling locations in the lower Sacramento River (e.g. Tisdale) or in the delta.

Operations (10/18/11)

SWP		CVP	
Exports (cfs)			
Clifton Court Forebay	,6680	Jones Pumping Plant	4,200
Reservoir releases (cfs)			
Feather - Oroville	2,300	American - Nimbus	4,000
		Sacramento - Keswick	7,000
		Stanislaus - Goodwin	1,900–2,100
Reservoir Storage (TAF)			
San Luis (SWP)	932	San Luis (CVP)	693
Oroville	2,934	Shasta	3,259
		Folsom	649
		New Melones	
Delta Operations			
DCC	Open as of 10/14	Sacramento River at Freeport (cfs)	17,254
Outflow Index (cfs)	10800	San Joaquin River (cfs)	4,700
Total Delta Inflow (cfs)	23654	OMR (daily)	
Water Temperature (°F)		OMR 5 day	
X2 (km)	72 (daily); 2- day is ~72	OMR 14 day	
E/I			

Stanislaus River at Goodwin Dam: Releases ranged between 1,900 and 2,500 cfs since last week to provide short-term variability intended to discourage fall-run Chinook spawning, or at least discourage spawning at the higher flows.. This release schedule with subdaily variability will continue through 10/24. Flows are expected to drop to 1,000 cfs by the end of the month and possibly to 500 cfs by the end of the year.

San Joaquin River at Vernalis: Flows are higher than what is typical for this time of year. They were 5,375 cfs on 10/14/11, dropping to 4,700 cfs today.

X2 is about 72 km for the 2-day and 15-day averages; 74 km for the September average. Water quality in the Delta is still good.

DOSS advice to WOMT and NMFS: None

Next Meeting: In person meeting on Tuesday, 10/25/11, 9:00 a.m., location to be announced and meeting to be combined with the annual review practice run.